

CONTACT:

BACK TO RECYCLING BASICS

Back to school time for many people means back to school shopping. Use the opportunity as a teaching moment for your kids about how to choose products that minimize our impact on the Earth and ensure that their generation will continue to enjoy a clean environment.

When buying paper products, such as notebooks and looseleaf, look for post consumer waste content (PCW) and process chlorine free (PCF) labels.

Many pencils and pens have PCW content or are wood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Some pens are made from cornstarch and are 100 percent biodegradable. For teens, invest in an expensive pen that uses cartridges instead of disposable pens.

For plastic products, such as backpacks, rulers or binders, look for “No PVC” labels to ensure the product does not contain vinyl, which is produced with and contains toxins that accumulate in the environment and living organisms.

Many scissors and rulers are made from recycled steel, metal, or plastic, and are often less expensive than the traditional ones.

Lunch boxes for kids and parents are a good purchase. Skip the disposable paper and buy a reusable tote. Also, pack sandwiches and snacks in reusable plastic containers instead of wasting plastic baggies, plastic wrap, or aluminum foil. Re-using containers cuts down on trash that goes to landfills and helps reduce the energy and raw materials used in making disposable bags and wraps.

Teaching children to make wise shopping choices reaps the reward of a healthy environment and an environmentally aware child.

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